

J.E.

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THE STRAND

DeRinh Plot on the Strand
50 feet adjoining Dutch Church lot on the south,
now #22 and #24 with alley between - #22 owned
by Peter J. Madden; #24 by Mary E. Sheridan and
Myrtle Booker Maguire
(See rnoto #18 and 19)

Original Plot - 5

When Andries Hudde sold his house on his 62-foot lot in 1657, for use as the Dutch church, there is no record as to whether he sold the whole 62 feet. His house was on the north side of the lot. South of his 60 feet and adjoining was the 60-foot lot of Sander (Alexander) Fenix. Sander Fenix disappears from the records and in 1673 when a house and lot are confirmed to Mathias and Emilius deRinh adjoining the church property to the south, this lot is 50 feet, and the church lot has been narrowed to about 40 feet.

Nothing has been found about Sander Fenix or his disposal of the property, or any of the owners between 1656 and 1673 when the property was confirmed to the deRinh's. Nicholas deRinh, father of Mathias and Emilius lived at New Amstel before 1658. He made a complaint to Peter Stuyvesant that year when the director-general came down from Manhattan on a visit. In 1659, Deputy-director D'Hinojosa gave Nicholas a patent for a large tract of land "near the mill", along and stretching behind Delaware Street between Second and Third. His Eons sold only part of it in 1670 and they had another plot near the river south of Delaware Street, but Emilius, who was reader in the Dutch church from 1664 to 1678 must have lived in the house on the north part of this 50 feet next to the church yard.

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(DeRinh Plot, Continued)

Amilius deRinh, who married Susanah, eldest daughter of Gysbert Derricksen, a Dutch owner of considerable property north of Harmony Street, had three children, Nicholas, Gysbert and Lucratia. He died in 1732, and the reader in the church at that time who was also the school-teacher, Isaac Selover, wrote the will of Emilius while the latter was sick in bed. The property next the church with his other possessions was left to his wife and children.

About 1700, John Brewster, "baker" and "innholder" began to buy from the heirs of Nicholas deRinh their shares in this 50-foot lot with its dwelling house. By 1706, he owned the house and lot and also the water lot on the opposite side of the street. The house, fronting what was later Packet Alley, occupied a valuable site, and here John Brewster kept a tavern and probably a shop. He may have occupied the property soon after the death of deRinh. In 1709, John Brewster, "innholder" out of his affection for his wife, says the deed, conveyed the property to Richard Halliwell, merchant, along with some silver, retaining the use and profits during the lifetime of himself and his wife.

John Brewster died in 1719, leaving his wife Elizabeth, and three granddaughters, the children of his dead son, Job. Richard Halliwell left his houses on the Strand to his nephew Thomas Halliwell of Liverpool, who came to New Castle after his uncle's death in 1719, and disposed of the property. The Reverend George

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(DeRingh Plot, Continued)

Ross of Immanuel Church was one of the executors. Whether or not Mr. Ross bought the property from the heirs has not been discovered, and no certain owners have been found until "1751", when Jacob Ross and John Sayre sold it to Thomas McKean. (There may be an error in the date, 1751, because Thomas McKean in that year was only 18 years old.

Thomas McKean, signer of the Declaration of Independence and one of the most distinguished and able men in this country during the Revolutionary period, owned the property until 1791 and may have lived here much of the time between his admission to practice in the courts of the Three Counties in 1754 and his removal to Philadelphia in 1773 or 1774. Because of Thomas McKean's great historical importance to Delaware, and to the creation of the United States, a page of biographical notes, chiefly of his public services, is inserted here. (separate page attached)

... [faint handwritten text] ...

In deRingh's time, his garden fence must have extended from his house to the house of Isaac Tayne for all plots were required to be so fenced that pigs, cows and horses could not stray onto the streets or neighbors' property, and as seemed to be the custom on the Strand at that time entrance to stables, barns and other buildings may have been from the Market place. It may have been for this reason that John Brewster kept part of his back lot when he sold the large part of it for the Presbyterian meeting house in 1707, until an entrance from the Strand could be made and fenced.

Whether the driveway or alley was provided for in John Brewster's time or later, it became of importance later in the century as a way to stables that were used by the Union Line Tavern across the Strand on the site of what was later the Stockton house adjoining Packet Alley on the south.

The whole plot, 50' x 250', was bought from Thomas McKean in 1791 by Archibald Alexander and John Stockton, jointly. In 1795 these owners divided the lot, the north half to Alexander and the south half to John Stockton. In 1806, Archibald Alexander sold the north half, now #24, to Richard Sexton, "wharf-builder" for \$2,666.67. That same year John Stockton sold the south part, now #22, to Mary Betson, widow of John Betson, innkeeper. John Betson, who in 1798 had a small tavern on the southwest corner of Third and Delaware Streets, kept a tavern adjoining the south side of

(DeRingham Plot, continued)

Packet Alley in the early 1800's on the site of what was the Union Line Hotel and the site of the Stockton house after the fire of 1824.

In the sales of 1806, the interest of the tavern owners on the site #22 began to be apparent. The ground and stables behind it provided the stables, barns, and yards for travelers' horses and vehicles. The building on the site of #22 on the 1804 survey is one story with an attic and very small compared with the dwellings on both sides of it and looks like an office or shop.

The house on the site of #24, which may have been the home of Thomas McKean, is two stories and of simpler design and looks much older than the house on the site of the Manse, in 1804, and was probably the Brewster house and may have been or may have incorporated the house of Emilius deRingham. Both #22 and #24 were destroyed in the fire of 1824. Both were replaced soon afterward by the present houses. The McKean site was controlled by Richard Sexton and his son Dr. Richard Dexton until 1831, and afterward to Isaac Register who owned both properties in 1851. Its subsequent history is still not completed in this search.

The present #22, owned by the Union Line Transportation Company in 1830, was sold to Isaac Register, who sold the house, and lot 17' by only 82' deep to . . . Janvier in . . . was sold or mortgaged to Robert Murray in 1861 and by him conveyed to Ann Janvier Black, William Janvier's sister. Both were the heirs of

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(DeRin~~gh~~ Plot, contfnued)

John Janvier. Ann Janvier, widow of Dr. Charles H. Black, left it to her son Dr, William J. Black from whom along with other heirs it came to the present owner, Peter G. Madden,

Neither of these two houses, #22 and #24, in their present state, are of any particular merit architecturally, but nevertheless, due to their simplicity, do not detract greatly from the general effect of the street. #22 could be greatly improved by the removal of a large shed dormer on the front of the building which is of poor design and of a late date. This report mould recommend further study of this site in view of the prominence of one of its early owners, Thomas McKean.